

**Volunteer Role Description**

**Prioritisation Panel volunteer**

**Purpose of Prioritisation Panel**

The purpose of the Healthwatch Prioritisation Panel is to represent the voice of local people, making positive changes in health and social care.

The panel’s main duty is to work with Healthwatch staff to review feedback received from the public and decide on actions which ensure service users’ voices are heard and issues resolved. The panel’s recommendations also inform the Healthwatch Area Work Plan.

Its main functions are to:

1. **Prioritise issues**

This is the main task of the panel and involves working with Healthwatch to analyse the data that Healthwatch holds in order to determine which themes or issues are of highest priority for patients and service users in the area.

2. **Decide how issues are taken forward**

Prioritisation Panel members work with Healthwatch to recommend what form each piece of work should take e.g. Gathering more information through a patient questionnaire, focus group or patient and user interviews, making a recommendation to a service, or specific tasks and processes as agreed by the panel.

**Accountability**

The Prioritisation Panel is accountable to Healthwatch and ultimately to the general public who use health and social care services in Bristol, North Somerset or South Gloucestershire.

**About the role**

Healthwatch is an independent organisation that helps people get the best from their local health and social care services. Our aim is to ensure that the views and experiences of the public are used to bring about real changes in how local services are designed and delivered.

The Prioritisation Panel has an integral role in deciding the future work of Healthwatch. It has been established to assist Healthwatch to decide on what actions to take regarding comments received from the public about their local services.

These actions can range from asking for more information and making recommendations for changes to services, to deciding when to undertake Enter & View visits or refer issues to regulatory bodies. It is the role of the panel to recommend the appropriate action for each issue discussed.

Members of the panel will be required to meet quarterly to discuss issues that have been raised

with Healthwatch. The Panel will be required to assess the priority of issues using a Prioritisation Matrix.

**Working Practice**

The Prioritisation Panel will meet at least 4 times each year (quarterly). The meeting dates and venues will be agreed by the Panel at its meetings or through consultation in the period between meetings. The meetings will be open to the public to view proceedings but the public will not contribute to the meetings.

The Prioritisation Panel Chair is responsible for chairing the meetings and, following review by the Panel, approves the minutes.

Agendas and papers will be sent out 1 week prior to the meeting - email is the preferred method of communication.

The Prioritisation Panel meetings are supported by a Healthwatch team member.

**What we require from you:**

* Membership of Healthwatch
* An extensive knowledge of health & social care functions
* The ability and commitment to attend quarterly Prioritisation Panel meetings.
* A commitment of the time necessary before each Panel meeting to read through the documentation provided and to consider your own score using the Prioritisation Matrix.
* Actively participate in meetings through attendance, discussion, and review of minutes, papers and other Prioritisation Panel documents.
* To put the needs of the communities before any personal interest in any health or social care issue.
* To provide an unbiased and objective view on issues discussed.
* To declare any conflicts of interest and not participate in any issues where this arises.
* To adhere to Healthwatch’s confidentiality policy.
* To ensure that Healthwatch maintains equality and diversity in its work.
* Prioritisation Panel members will be expected to abide fully by Healthwatch’s Code of Conduct and maintain high standards of integrity.

**What to expect from Healthwatch**

* A volunteer induction and ongoing support from a Volunteer Co-ordinator
* Appropriate training for the role, how comments progress to the prioritisation stage and how to use the scoring matrix.
* Appropriate resources to be able to fulfil the role, for example folders, pens, and all paperwork necessary.
* Expenses for attending meetings.
* Any other appropriate support as identified individually.
* Respect and recognition for your contribution as a volunteer.

**Benefits**

Volunteering with Healthwatch will give you the opportunity to:

* Involve yourself in your community.
* Meet new people.
* Play an important role improving health and social care.
* Learn new skills or improve existing ones.
* Gain experience that could be a stepping-stone into employment or training.

We can provide a reference for volunteers after 3 months volunteering.

**How to Apply**

Please complete a volunteer application form and equality and diversity monitoring form. If you are offered a volunteering role we will need to check references from people who know you well.

Return your form to:

Healthwatch Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire,

3rd Floor, The Sion,

Crown Glass Place,

Nailsea,

BS48 1RB

Or [julia@healthwatchbnssg.co.uk](mailto:julia@healthwatchbnssg.co.uk)

To help us decide if this is the right opportunity for you we will invite you to an informal interview after receiving your completed form.

For more information visit:

[www.healthwatchbristol.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchbristol.co.uk/)

[www.healthwatchnorthsomerset.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchnorthsomerset.co.uk/)

[www.healthwatchsouthglos.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchsouthglos.co.uk/)

Please call Julia Senior-Smith, Volunteer Co-ordinator, on 01275 854311 if you have any questions.